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ABSTRACT

This document consists of four papers that were read as a joint presentation on learning in the workplace and credentials in employment. Reported in the first paper, "Educational Credentials in Employment: A Nationwide Survey" by Andrew G. Malizio and Douglas R. Whitney, are the results of a survey in which 1,500 members of the American Society for Personnel Administration were asked to indicate their company's emphasis on educational credentials in its employment practices and to rate the importance of various skills and attitudes for employees in jobs requiring not more than a high school diploma or equivalency credential. The survey instrument is appended. The next report, by Sylvia W. Galloway, is a program description and analysis entitled "The Program on Noncollegiate-Sponsored Instruction of the American Council on Education." In the next report, "Implications for Registrars and Admissions Officers in Awarding Credit for Learning Acquired in the Workplace," Elbert W. Ockerman discusses various sources of extra-institutional learning, their built-in levels of quality assurance, and the development of institutional policies regarding their acceptance. The final paper, "Employer Requirements for Today's Work Force" by Dennis M. Benson, discusses both the increased need for more educated workers that has occurred because of rapid technological advancement and also the specialized training programs that employers have had to develop to meet this need. (MN)

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CREDENTIALS IN EMPLOYMENT: LEARNING IN THE WORKPLACE

Presenters: Andrew G. Malizio
American Council on Education

Sylvia W. Galloway, Ph.D.
American Council on Education

Discussants: Dennis M. Benson, Ed.D.
American Society for
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American Association of Collegiate
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Presentation at the 1984 AAACE National Adult Education Conference, Louisville, KY, November 7-11, 1984.

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Credentials and Employment: Learning in the Workplace

NOVEMBER 9, 1984

Summary

Results of a recent nationwide survey indicate that employers highly value educational credentials. Further, nearly all employers afford comparable status to traditional high school diplomas, high school equivalency credentials, or alternative degree program certificates. Obtaining high school and college credentials is important to employers as well as to their employees (students). Awarding credit rewards learning, and accepting credit for non-institutional learning stimulates formal study. Many opportunities for valid credit awards exist--but are not well known to business, educational institutions, or students. Efforts of the American Council on Education's Program on Noncollegiate Sponsored Instruction to assist adult learners in gaining academic recognition for formal learning acquired at the workplace are described. Implications for personnel administrators in business and industry, as well as admissions officials at colleges and universities, are discussed.

Program administrators, teachers, and members of the business and industry unit need to know how adults can obtain formal recognition for the learning acquired in the workplace and share this information with adults in their community. In an "information society," recognition for prior learning eliminates redundant instruction.

Presenters: Andrew G. Malizio, Senior Research Associate, American Council on Education and Sylvia Galloway, Director, Program on Noncollegiate Sponsored Instruction, American Council on Education.

Discussants: Dennis M. Benson, Director, Professional Development, American Society for Personnel Administration; and Elbert W. Ockerman, Assistant Executive Director, American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers.

EDUCATIONAL CREDENTIALS IN EMPLOYMENT: A NATIONWIDE SURVEY[1]

Andrew G. Malizio and Douglas R. Whitney
American Council on Education

Abstract

This nationwide survey was designed to determine the role of educational credentials in the employment practices of companies and institutions in the private sector. Fifteen hundred members of the American Society for Personnel Administration were asked to indicate their company's emphasis on educational credentials in its employment practices and to rate the importance of various skills and attitudes for most employees in jobs that require not more than a high school diploma or equivalency credential. Employers reported placing considerable emphasis on educational credentials. About one-fourth of the companies have no jobs for adults with less than a high school diploma or equivalency credential. At approximately half of the companies, persons hired with less than a high school diploma can enhance their opportunities for promotion by obtaining a high school equivalency credential.

Introduction

During fall 1983, the American Council on Education's Office on Educational Credit and Credentials conducted a nationwide survey entitled[2] Educational Credentials in Employment. The study was co-sponsored by the

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[1]Paper presented at the 1984 AAACE National Adult Education Conference, Louisville, KY, November 9, 1984 at the session entitled "Credentials and Employment: Learning in the Workplace."

[2]The authors acknowledge and appreciate the assistance of the project advisory board: Catherine D. Bower, Vice-President of Communications, American Society for Personnel Administration; Dorothy C. Fenwick, Associate Director, ACE Office on Educational Credit and Credentials; Carnie Ives Lincoln, C. W. Lincoln Associates, and Curtis E. Plott, Executive Vice President, American Society for Training and Development, as well as the personnel directors and administrators who responded to this survey.

American Society for Personnel Administration (ASPA) and the American Society for Training and Development (ASTD). The survey focused on the emphasis employers place on educational credentials and on whether employers make distinctions among a traditional high school diploma, a high school equivalency (GED) credential, or an alternative degree program certificate in hiring or promoting employees. In addition, employers were asked to indicate the importance of certain skills and attitudes for most people employed by their company in jobs that normally require not more than a high school diploma or equivalency credential.

Method

Sample and Procedure

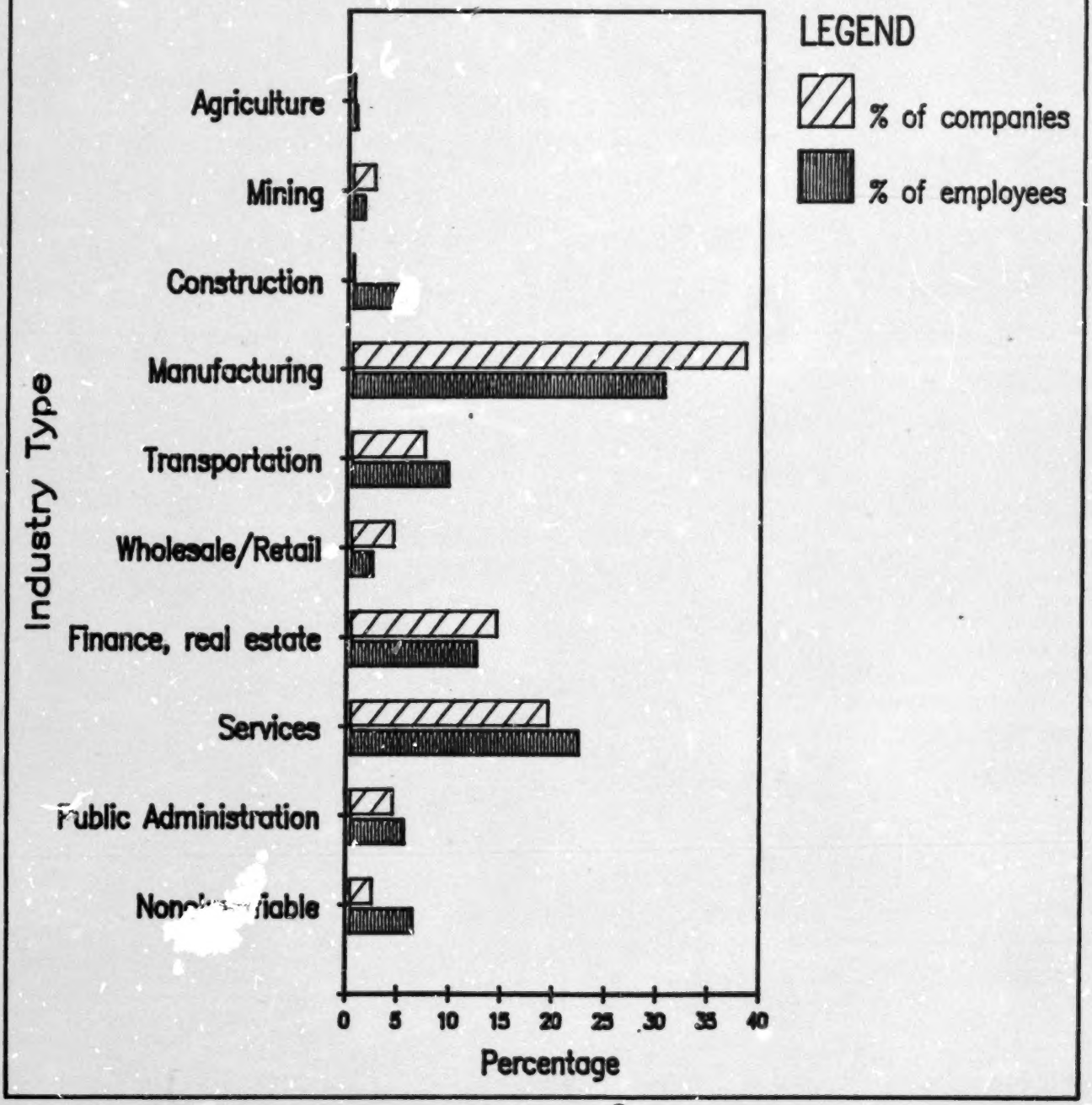
In September 1983, a random sample of 1,500 ASPA members received a letter describing the project, and a one-page survey (see Appendix 1). The person responsible for hiring in the company was asked to complete the survey. A follow-up mailing was conducted during October 1983. Six-hundred forty-three completed surveys (43%) were returned. To determine the type of responding companies, employers were asked to indicate their company's Standard Industrial Classification (SIC). Figure 1 shows that most respondents were from manufacturing or service industries.

Results

Number of people employed

The companies responding to the survey employ between two and thirty-five thousand people. The typical company--based on the median--has about 275 employees. Nearly 98% of the companies have ten or more employees. Approximately 40% of the companies have 200 or fewer employees, 26% have between 201 and 500 employees; and 34% have more than 500 employees. Preliminary analyses indicate that overall, the responding companies probably under-represent the

Figure 1. STANDARD INDUSTRIAL CLASSIFICATION OF RESPONDING COMPANIES



number of wholesale and retail companies nationally. The number of finance, insurance, and real estate companies is slightly over-represented (Bureau of Census, 1983, County Business Patterns, 1981, Table 1B).

Emphasis on educational credentials

Employers were asked: WHAT EMPHASIS IS PLACED ON EDUCATIONAL CREDENTIALS IN YOUR COMPANY'S EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES?

More than 90% of those responding place either a major or moderate emphasis on educational credentials. This emphasis affects more than 95% of the people employed by these companies. As indicated in Figure 2, this finding was consistent across companies of various sizes. Approximately 42% of the companies with more than 500 employees place a major emphasis on educational credentials compared to 35% of the companies with between 201-500 employees, but, the relationship between company size and emphasis on credentials was not statistically significant. Those employers who responded "NONE" (2%) were instructed not to respond to the items about documentation, opportunities, etc. described below.

Employers were asked to indicate the percentage of people employed by their company in jobs that required: less than a high school diploma, a high school diploma or equivalency credential, certification or degree beyond high school, or a degree from a college or university. Figure 3 shows the percentage of employees in jobs by educational credential.

Overall, about 18% of the employees are working in positions that require less than a high school diploma. Twenty-three percent of the companies responding have no jobs that require less than a high school diploma. About

Figure 2. EMPHASIS ON EDUCATIONAL CREDENTIALS BY COMPANY SIZE

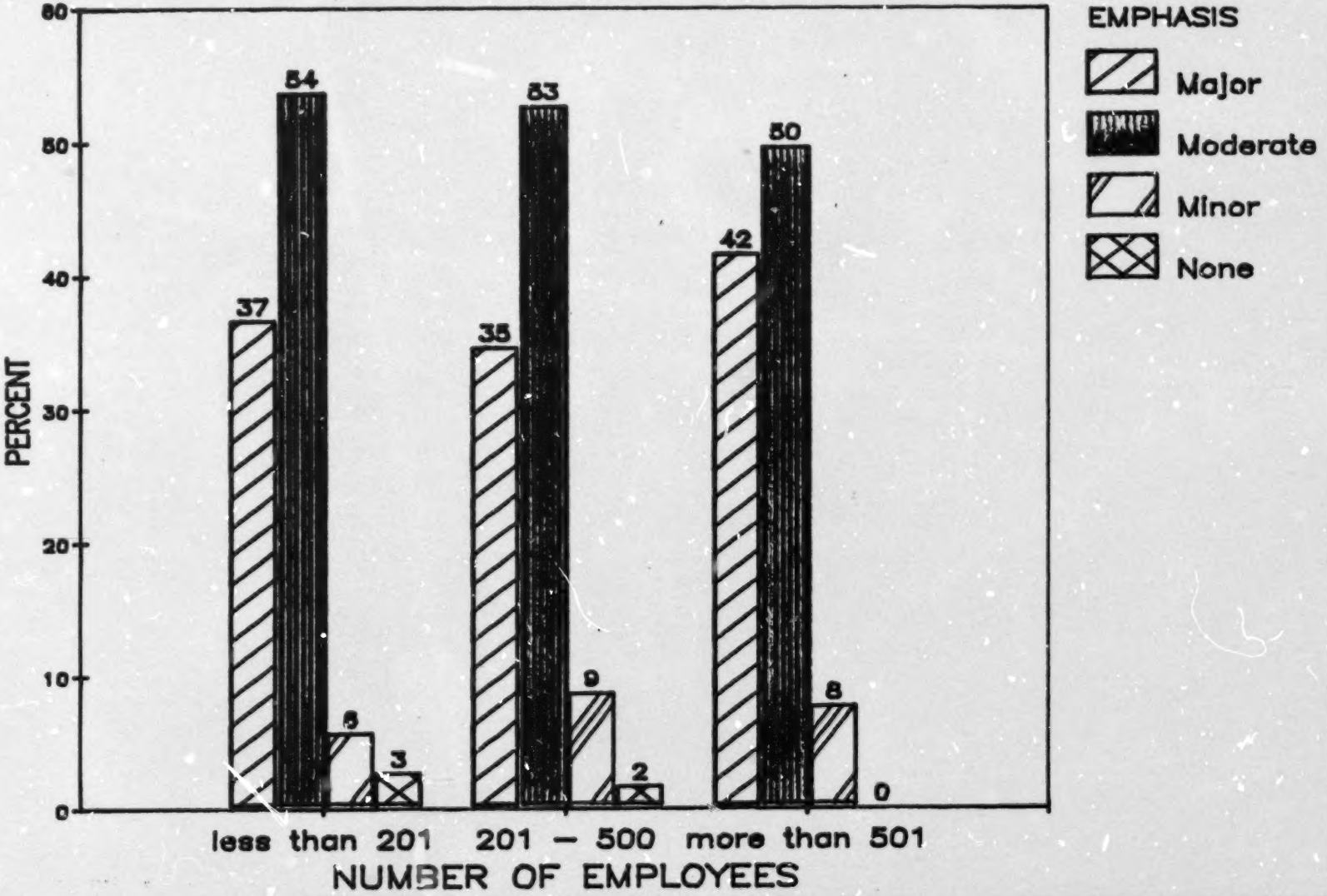
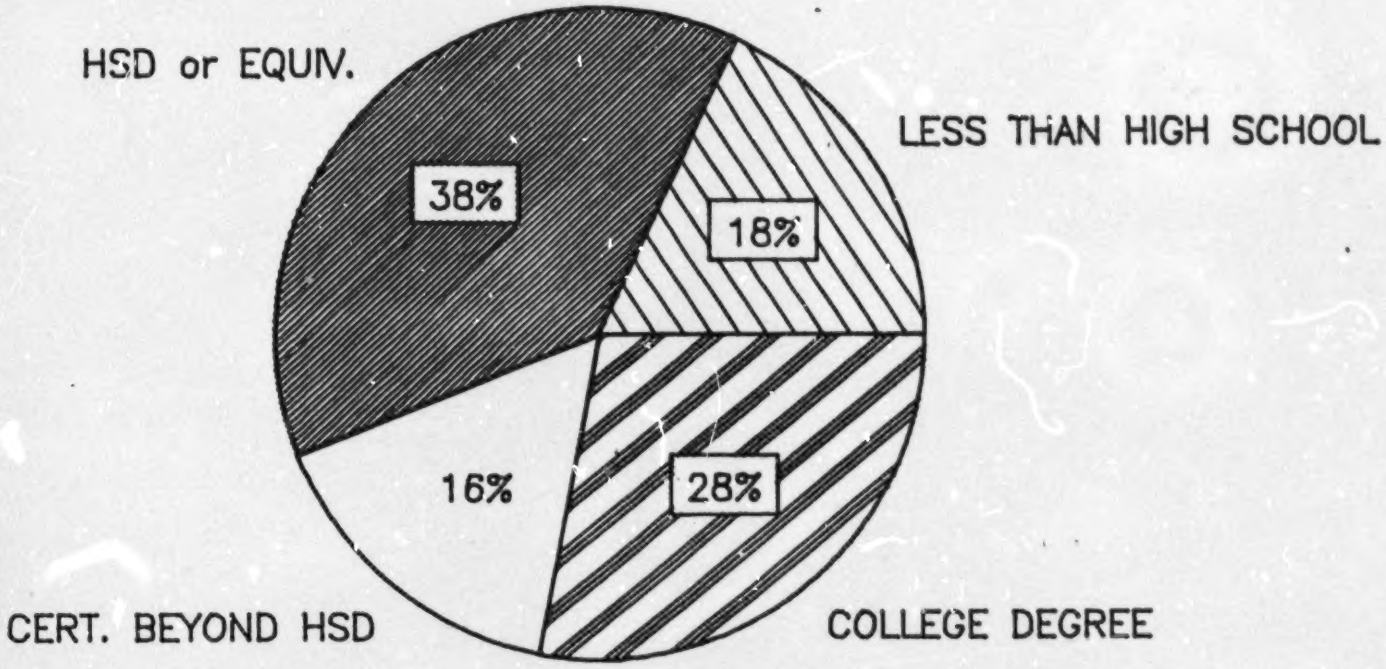


Figure 3. PERCENTAGE OF EMPLOYEES IN JOBS BY EDUCATIONAL CREDENTIAL



HSD = High school diploma

one half of the companies have fewer than 8% of their employees in jobs requiring less than a high school diploma. Approximately 15% of the companies have a majority (50% or more) of their employees in such jobs.

Overall, about 38% of the employees are working in positions that require a high school diploma or equivalency credential. About one half of the companies responding have 40% or fewer employees in jobs that require a high school diploma or equivalency credential. Approximately 37% of the companies have a majority of their employees in such jobs.

Overall, about 16% of the people are working in positions that require certification beyond the high school level. Six percent of the companies have no employees in jobs that required such certification. Half the companies have less than 11% of their employees in this category. Approximately three percent of the companies have a majority of their employees in such jobs.

Overall, about 28% of the employees are working in positions that require a college degree. About one percent of the companies have no employees in jobs requiring a college degree. Approximately 15% have a majority of their employees in jobs that require such a degree.

Documentation of credentials

Approximately 25% of the employers--ranging from 36% for transportation industries to 11% for finance and real estate companies--request a copy of job applicant's educational credential (i.e., copy of actual diploma). Nearly 40% request a copy of the educational transcript (e.g., courses/grades obtained). About half of the transportation companies compared to about one-fourth of the finance and real estate companies request copies of transcripts. There were no statistically significant relationships between company size and credential documentation practices. An additional ten percent of the employers verify the

awarding of credentials for positions requiring a college degree by telephoning the institution directly rather than by requesting copies of transcripts or diplomas.

Opportunities

More than 96% of the companies give persons holding traditional high school diplomas and persons holding equivalency credentials the same starting salary. Nearly 97% provide the same initial level of employment to these persons. Approximately 98% of the companies provide the same opportunity for advancement to persons holding traditional high school diplomas and persons holding equivalency credentials. Nearly 50% of the companies responding indicated that for persons hired with less than a high school diploma, obtaining an equivalency credential would enhance opportunities for promotion.

Company educational programs

Approximately 57% of all companies--ranging from 78% of the transportation industries to 24% of the retail industries--have a tuition reimbursement program in effect to encourage persons with less than high school completion to earn their diploma. About 9% offer released time to employees; 17% provide on-site training--ranging from 31% of the transportation industries to five percent of the retail industries--for this purpose. Larger companies are more likely than smaller companies to offer on-site courses and tuition reimbursement.

Tuition reimbursement is provided by nearly 75% of the companies in which employees who had not completed high school but earned an equivalency credential would enhance opportunities for promotion provide tuition reimbursement; 12% offer released time; and about 25% give on-site courses.

Skill/Attitudes

Depending on the occupation, a variety of skills and attitudes may be essential to successful job performance. Employers were asked to rate the importance of certain skills and/or attitudes for most persons working in jobs that normally do not require more than a high school diploma or equivalncy credential. The following rating scale was used: V = Very Important; I = Important; N = Not Important. Table 1 shows the rankings of the various skills and attitudes based on the percentage responding "very important."

An overall rating for each skill and attitude was calculated by assigning values of "2" for very important, "1" for "important," or "0" for "not important." Means and standard deviations for each skill and attitude based on the employers' ratings are shown in Table 2. The two most highly rated skills were accurately completing the job assignment--average rating of 1.79--and following spoken instructions--average rating of 1.76. In contrast, typing, composing letters and reports, using shop tools, using word processing equipment, directing the work of others, and fluency in a foreign language each had average ratings below 1.0.

Information from Part II of the survey may be useful in future curriculum and test development activities of educational organizations working with adults who have not completed high school (e.g., developing curriculae that address employers' needs and values).

Conclusions

Employers place considerable emphasis on educational credentials. Adults holding high school equivalency credentials are afforded the same opportunities by employers as adults with traditional high school diplomas. Getting along with people, the ability to read and understand information, and following spoken and written instructions were considered either "very important" or

Table 1

Importance of Various Skills/Attitudes
By Percent of Company Responding

	Percent of companies responding...		
SKILL/ATTITUDE	VERY IMPORTANT	IMPORTANT	NOT IMPORTANT
Completing job assignment	80%	19%	1%
Following spoken instructions	77	21	1
Getting along with people	70	26	3
Reading and understanding info.	59	37	3
Following written instructions	53	41	6
Accurately relaying phone messages	46	40	14
Working with minimal supervision	39	56	5
Fluency in English	39	53	8
Using basic arithmetic	36	56	8
Keeping records and books	25	56	19
Solving problems	24	59	17
Using office equipment	23	54	23
Typing	17	51	31
Using shop tools	17	37	46
Composing letters, reports	14	44	42
Using word processing equipment	10	35	55
Directing work of others	11	30	60
Fluency in non-English language	1	5	94

Table 2

Average Skill/Attitude Ratings
Fall 1983 Survey of ASPA Members

Skill/Attitude	Mean	SD
Accurately completing job assignment	1.79	.44
Following spoken instructions	1.76	.46
Getting along with other people	1.67	.54
Reading and understanding information	1.55	.56
Following written instructions	1.48	.60
Working with minimal supervision	1.35	.56
Accurately take/relay telephone messages	1.32	.70
Fluency in English	1.30	.61
Using basic arithmetic	1.28	.60
Solving problems	1.08	.64
Keeping records and books	1.07	.66
Using office equipment	1.00	.68
Typing	.86	.68
Composing letters, reports, etc.	.72	.69
Using shop tools	.71	.74
Using word processing equipment	.55	.67
Directing work of others	.51	.68
Fluency in non-English language	.07	.31

Note: The number of companies responding to each question ranged from 597 to 620.

"important" by nearly all employers for most people employed in jobs that normally require not more than a high school diploma or equivalency credential. These findings are consistent with those reported in High Schools and the Changing Workplace: The Employers' View (National Academy of Sciences, 1984). Twenty-five percent of the companies have no jobs for adults with less than a high school diploma or equivalency credential. Almost half of the companies responding indicated that persons hired with less than a high school diploma would enhance their opportunities for promotion by obtaining an equivalency credential. Approximately seventy-five percent of these companies do have tuition benefit programs. A recent study of corporate tuition aid programs of the Fortune 1000--industrial Fortune 500 and the service Fortune 500--found that nearly all of the companies that replied have a tuition benefit program (O'Neill, 1984). Adults should be aware of these practices, especially because 44% of the adults currently employed are in positions that require training beyond the secondary level.

References

American Society for Personnel Administration. (1984) Work in the 21st Century (An Anthology of Writings on the Changing World of Work). Alexandria, VA: Author.

National Academy of Sciences. (1984) High Schools and the changing Workplace: The Employers' view (Report of the Panel on Secondary School Education for the Changing Workplace). Washington, DC: National Academy Press.

O'Neill, J. P. (1984) Corporate Tuition Aid Programs. Princeton, NJ: Conference University Press.

U.S. Bureau of the Census. (1983). County Business Patterns, 1981. (U.S. Department of Commerce Publication No. CBP-81-1). Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office.

(DATA FROM THIS TABLE WAS USED IN FIGURE 1)

Standard Industrial Classification of Respondents

INDUSTRY	PERCENT OF COMPANIES	PERCENT OF EMPLOYEES
Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing	1	1
Mining (e.g., metal, oil & gas extraction)	3	2
Construction (e.g., building, contractors)	1	6
Manufacturing (e.g., food, textile, chemical)	39	31
Transportation, communication, electric gas and sanitary service (e.g., railroad, local and suburban transit, water transportation)	8	10
Wholesale and Retail trade (e.g., foodstores, general merchandise, eating and drinking)	5	3
Finance, insurance and real estate (e.g., banking, security and commodity brokers)	15	13
Services (e.g., hotels, personal services)	20	23
Public administration (e.g., public order, public finance, taxation)	5	6
Nonclassifiable	3	7

Preliminary analyses indicate that overall, the responding companies probably under-represent the number of wholesale and retail companies nationally. The number of finance, insurance, and real estate companies is slightly over-represented (Bureau of Census, 1983, County Business Patterns, 1981, Table 1B).

AMERICAN COUNCIL ON EDUCATION
AMERICAN SOCIETY FOR PERSONNEL ADMINISTRATION
AMERICAN SOCIETY FOR TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT, INC.

Educational Credentials in Employment: A Nationwide Survey

September 1983

Dear ASPA Member:

Despite growing concern over the credibility of today's high school diploma, the American public still believes that schooling is important to one's future. The award of a high school diploma is an important event in the lives of millions of high school students each year. For a variety of reasons (e.g., financial responsibility, illness, employment, etc.), many people do not complete formal high school instruction. Estimates vary with respect to the number of students who leave school each year, ranging from 800,000 to one million. Many of these people later decide to resume their education and participate in adult education programs hoping to earn a high school credential. Hundreds have participated in alternative high school programs each year. One type of high school equivalency credential is based on the nationwide Tests of General Educational Development (GED). In 1982, nearly 800,000 people took the GED Tests. A recent national survey of people taking the GED Tests indicated that nearly 40 percent were doing so for employment related reasons, while another thirty percent cited furthering their education and training beyond the secondary level. Similar results might be obtained from a survey of the completers of other adult high school programs.

Enclosed is a survey -- **EDUCATIONAL CREDENTIALS IN EMPLOYMENT** -- part of a nationwide project being administered by the American Council on Education (ACE), and co-sponsored by the American Society for Personnel Administration (ASPA), and the American Society for Training and Development, Inc. (ASTD). The purpose of this survey is to determine to what extent hiring and promotion policies of companies in the private sector emphasize educational credentials and high school completion. You are asked to provide the approximate percentage of jobs within your company for which various levels of educational attainment are normally considered necessary. In addition, you are asked to rate the importance of specific skills/attitudes for most people employed at your work site in jobs that normally require not more than a high school diploma or equivalency credential.

Only a sample of ASPA members has been asked to respond to this survey. Thus, your response is very important. Please take a few minutes to complete and return the enclosed survey. If you are not the person primarily responsible for hiring in your company, please forward this survey to the appropriate person. The number that appears on your survey will be used for follow-up purposes only. Practices of individual companies will not be reported. Only group data will be presented in any report(s).

Thank you in advance for your participation in this nationwide survey!

Sincerely,

Henry A. Spille
Director/OECC

Ronald C. Pilenzo, APD
President/ASPA

Curtis E. Plott
Executive Vice President/ASTD

AMERICAN COUNCIL ON EDUCATION
AMERICAN SOCIETY FOR PERSONNEL ADMINISTRATION
AMERICAN SOCIETY FOR TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT, INC.

Educational Credentials in Employment: A Nationwide Survey

SIC Codes

Find the S. I. C. Code which most nearly describes your organization's products or services.

Agriculture, forestry and fishing
01 Agricultural production – Crops
02 Agricultural production – Livestock
07 Agricultural services
08 Forestry
09 Fishing, hunting, trapping

Mining
10 Metal
11 Anthracite mining
12 Bituminous coal and lignite mining
13 Oil and gas extraction
14 Mining and quarrying of non-metallic minerals, except fuels

Construction
15 Building construction – general contractors and operative builders
16 Construction other than building construction – general contractors
17 Construction – special trade contractors

Manufacturing
20 Food and kindred products
21 Tobacco manufacturers
22 Textile mill products
23 Apparel and other finished products made from fabrics and similar materials
24 Lumber and wood products, except furniture
25 Furniture and fixtures
26 Paper and allied products
27 Printing, publishing and allied industries
28 Chemicals and allied products
29 Petroleum refining and related industries
30 Rubber and miscellaneous plastic products
31 Leather and leather products
32 Stone, clay, glass and concrete products
33 Primary metal industries
34 Fabricated metal products, except machinery and transportation equipment
35 Machinery, except electrical
36 Electrical and electronic machinery, equipment and supplies
37 Transportation equipment
38 Measuring, analyzing and controlling instruments; photographic, medical and optical goods; watches and clocks
39 Miscellaneous manufacturing industries

Transportation, communication, electric, gas and sanitary services
40 Railroad transportation
41 Local and suburban transit and interurban highway passenger transportation
42 Motor freight transportation and warehousing
43 U. S. Postal Service
44 Water transportation
45 Transportation by air
46 Pipe lines except natural gas
47 Transportation services
48 Communication
49 Electric, gas, and sanitary services

Wholesale trade
50 Wholesale trade – durable goods
51 Wholesale trade – non-durable goods

Retail trade
52 Building materials, hardware, garden supply and mobile home dealers
53 General merchandise stores
54 Food stores
55 Automotive dealers and gasoline service stations
56 Apparel and accessory stores
57 Furniture, home furnishings and equipment stores
58 Eating and drinking places
59 Miscellaneous retail

Finance, insurance and real estate
60 Banking
61 Credit agencies other than banks
62 Security and commodity brokers, dealers exchanges and services
63 Insurance
64 Insurance agents, brokers and service
65 Real estate
66 Combinations of real estate, insurance, loans, law offices
67 Holding and other investment offices

Services
70 Hotels, rooming houses, camps and other lodging places
72 Personal services
73 Business services
75 Automotive repair, services and garages
76 Miscellaneous repair services
78 Motion pictures
79 Amusement and recreation services, except motion pictures
80 Health services
81 Legal services
82 Educational services
83 Social services
84 Museums, art galleries, botanical and zoological gardens
86 Membership organizations
88 Private households
89 Miscellaneous services

Public administration
91 Executive, legislative and general government, except finance
92 Justice, public order and safety
93 Public finance, taxation and monetary policy
94 Administration of human resources programs
95 Administration of environmental quality and housing programs
96 Administration of economic programs
97 National security and international affairs

Nonclassifiable establishment
99 Nonclassifiable establishments

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AMERICAN COUNCIL ON EDUCATION
AMERICAN SOCIETY FOR PERSONNEL ADMINISTRATION
AMERICAN SOCIETY FOR TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT, INC.

Educational Credentials in Employment: A Nationwide Survey

PART I

This survey is divided into two parts. The first part is intended to determine to what extent educational credentials and high school completion are emphasized in your company's employment practices.

1. Please indicate your company's S.I.C. (Refer to attached page for the code number.) ..... S.I.C. ☐

2. Annually, how many people are employed by your company at this work site? (If this number varies seasonally, please estimate on an average annual basis.) ..... ☐ 16–20

3. What emphasis is placed on educational credentials in your company's employment practices? (Check one) (If "NONE" go to PART II) 21
   ☐ a. *MAJOR* ☐ b. *MODERATE* ☐ c. *MINOR* ☐ d. *NONE* .....

4. What **percent** of the people in Item 2 are in jobs that require: (a + b + c + d should = 100)
   (a) Less than a high school diploma ..... ☐ 22–24
   (b) A high school diploma or equivalency credential ..... ☐ 25–27
   (c) Certification or degree beyond high school (e.g., Associate Degree from a two-year postsecondary institution; certificate from a trade or technical school) ..... ☐ 28–30
   (d) A degree from a college or university (e.g., BS, BA, MS, MA, Ph.D., Ed.D.) ..... ☐ 31–33

5. What kind of documentation of education credentials does your company require when hiring a job applicant? Do you request a copy of his/her:
   (a) educational credential? (e.g., copy of actual diploma or GED certificate) ..... ☐ Yes ☐ No 34
   (b) educational transcript? (e.g., course & grades obtained or GED Test score report) .. ☐ Yes ☐ No 35
   (c) Other, please explain: _____ 36

6. Is it your company's normal practice to give people holding regular high school diplomas and people holding high school equivalency credentials the same:
   (a) starting salary? ..... ☐ Yes ☐ No 37
   (b) initial level of employment? ..... ☐ Yes ☐ No 38
   (c) opportunity for advancement (e.g., training, promotion, salary increase)? ..... ☐ Yes ☐ No 39
   If you responded "No" to a, b, or c, please explain: _____ 40

7. For people hired with less than a high school diploma, will obtaining an equivalency credential enhance opportunities for promotion? ..... ☐ Not Applicable ☐ Yes ☐ No 41

8. Please indicate any programs that your company has in effect to encourage people with less than high school completion to earn their diploma or certificate. (MARK ALL THAT APPLY)
   ☐ On-site courses 42
   ☐ Released time 43
   ☐ Tuition reimbursement 44
   ☐ Other, please explain: _____ 45

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PART II

Depending on the occupation, many of the skills/attitudes presented below may be essential for jobs in your company. Some may not be as important. The information that you provide by responding to PART II will be useful in future curriculum and test development activities of educational organizations working with people who have not completed high school.

Please rate the importance of the following skills and/or attitudes as accurately as possible for **most people** employed at your company in *jobs that normally require **not more than** a high school diploma or equivalency credential.*

Use the following rating scale: (**V** = Very Important; **I** = Important; **N** = Not Important)

50 ____ Directing the work of others
51 ____ Being able to work with minimal supervision
52 ____ Keeping records and books
53 ____ Following written instructions
54 ____ Following spoken instructions
55 ____ Reading and understanding information
56 ____ Being able to accurately take/relay telephone messages
57 ____ Using word processing equipment
58 ____ Accurately completing job assignment
59 ____ Fluency in English
60 ____ Fluency in foreign language Which one(s)? _____ 61
62 ____ Getting along with other people
63 ____ Using shop tools
64 ____ Composing letters, reports, etc.
65 ____ Using basic arithmetic
66 ____ Solving problems
67 ____ Typing
68 ____ Using office equipment (e.g., copying duplicating, adding machine, etc. other than word processing equipment)
69 ____ Other; please explain: _____

70 Any additional comments about the emphasis on educational credentials in your company's employment practices?

_____

_____

_____

Would you like to receive additional information about the Tests of General Educational Development (GED)? ..... ☐ Yes ☐ No 71

IN ORDER TO CLARIFY ANY OF MY RESPONSES, I CAN BE REACHED AT THIS DAYTIME PHONE NUMBER:
( ) _____

IF THIS SURVEY WAS COMPLETED BY SOMEONE OTHER THAN ADDRESSEE, PLEASE WRITE YOUR NAME AND TITLE IN THE SPACE BELOW:

Name: _____ Title: _____

Thank you for taking your time to respond to this survey. Please use the enclosed envelope to mail your survey **(by September 23, 1983)** to: American Council on Education, Office on Educational Credit and Credentials, (Attn: **ACE/ASPA ASTD EMPLOYER SURVEY**), One Dupont Circle, NW, Washington, DC 20036-1193.

21 № 20270

THE PROGRAM ON NONCOLLEGIATE SPONSORED INSTRUCTION OF THE AMERICAN COUNCIL ON EDUCATION[3]

Sylvia Galloway
American Council on Education

Abstract

The American Council on Education's Program on Noncollegiate Sponsored Instruction was established in 1974 in response to a recommendation by the Carnegie Commission on Nontraditional Study. The Program, which has continued to grow as business and industry increase their education and training activities, is designed to assist adult learners receive academic recognition for formal learning acquired at the workplace. Postsecondary education can derive many benefits from adult learners who seek to become "credentialed" or to gain acceptance for their ACE credit recommendations.

Introduction

With the decade of the 1970s, there came a dynamic growth in what we have come to call "lifelong learning." Adults of all ages became concerned with increasing their skills and vocational interests. Some of this learning occurred in traditional settings (that is, in a school or on a college campus) while other learning occurred in noncollegiate environments. Such noncollegiate enviroments include, but are not limited to, industrial concerns, government agencies, labor unions, voluntary and professional associations as well as homes, places of worhip, proprietary schools, and community facilities.

Although much of the lifelong learning which has occurred (and is occurring) is undoubtedly tied to our needs to keep current or stay abreast of

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[3]Paper presented at the 1984 AAACE National Adult Education Conference, Louisville, KY, November 9, 1984 at the session entitled "Credentials and Employment: Learning in the Workplace."

change in this new information-age society (Niebuhr, 1984; Branscomb & Gilmore, 1975), it can also be convincingly argued that the surge of interest in lifelong learning--especially **formalized lifelong learning**--is a result of our concern with credentials. We live, in fact, in a "credentialing society" (Meyer, 1975) where it appears that the amount of one's credentialing is frequently linked to one's chances for upward mobility (Machlup, 1962).

Included among formalized lifelong learning experiences is employer-sponsored education--sometimes characterized as the "shadow education system" (Dunlop, 1975). Employer-sponsored education has become a major human-resource-development enterprise. The full extent of employer-sponsored education is only estimated. Craig and Evers (1981) suggest that the annual investment in employer-sponsored education is as much as $30 billion.

Program on Noncollegiate Sponsored Instruction

This paper describes an effort to formalize further (or credential) those adults who participate in the burgeoning area of employer-sponsored education. This effort is illustrated by the American Council on Education's Program on Noncollegiate Sponsored Instruction (PONSI). The Program (PONSI) demonstrates further that employers value educational credentials.

PONSI is designed to help employees or adult learners get academic recognition for courses taken in business, industry, federal agencies, unions, or professional and voluntary associations.

PONSI, begun in 1974, evolves from the American Council on Education's rich background in recognizing academic achievement for adult students through such programs as the GED Testing Program and the Military Evaluation Program; both programs were begun during or just after World War II. The creation of PONSI was the ACE/New York State Department of Education's response to a recommendation of the Carnegie Commission on Nontraditional Study.

Program Description

Over 2,500 courses have been evaluated for 202 organizations in 27 states. The results are reported in The National Guide to Educational Credit for Training Programs. The 1984-'85 edition will be published this month. This compendium describes courses with credit recommendations in a variety of areas such as management, business administration, Arabic, Russian, Meterology, Engineering Technology, and Computer Science. Among the 202 organizations carrying ACE credit-recommended courses are AT&T, Atlantic Richfield Company, the American Institute of Banking, Bank of America, Boy Scouts of America, Comunication Workers of America, Dana Corporation, Federal Aviation Administration, General Electric, General Motors, Humana, Inc., IBM, Jerrico Corporation, Knight-Ridder Newspapers, National Weather Service Training Center, Westinghouse, the U.S. Postal Service, and Xerox.

Eleven states now participate in the Program under agreements with ACE: California, Florida, Illinois, Iowa, Massachusetts, Michigan, North Carolina, New Jersey, Pennslyvania, Tennessee, and Wisconsin. Under these agreements, the states advise and assist ACE on the conduct of the Program with the state and support its development.

The Program also has evaluation arrangements with Thomas A. Edison State College, CLEO (Compact for Lifelong Educational Opportunity), and Webster University.

Thus far, on the basis of informal sampling, over 2,000 colleges and universities in all 50 states have made use of the PONSI or military program results in making credit awards.

Evaluation Process

The process is one of group professional review by teams of subject-matter experts. Most often, these are faculty members from accredited academic

institutions. Using policies and guidelines established by the Council's Commission on Educational Credit and Credentials, the teams evaluate noncollegiate courses in a one-, two-, or three-day visit to the training site of the organization. This visit is actually the culmination of the staff work by the organization and ACE staff members which amounts to an informal assessment of the organization's educational administration and the courses before the actual conduct of the review. During this preparatory period, the ACE staff considers such matters as whether the courses are eligible of length and whether evaluation of student performance is adequate. The staff works closely with the organization in preparing for the evaluation.

During the site visit, the team's major effort is devoted to examining course materials in detail: instructors' manuals, textbooks, visual aids, sample tests, projects or exercises. Administrative and instructional staff are available to answer questions on the courses and to supplement the written materials. In deciding whether to recommend a course for credit, evaluators consider factors such as staff capabilities, methods of instruction, subject matter, the student body and evaluation of student performance. The visit ends with a report of the teams's decision to the organization, which is actually the first step in disseminating the results. Soon after, written results are provided to the organization which then has the responsibility of informing its employees, members, or customers. The organization is also asked to inform those colleges and universities normally attended by its course participants that the results have been established; notification to colleges is done in cooperation with the ACE program staff. Subsequently, the results are disseminated to colleges and universities throughout the country, mainly by means of ACE/OECC newsletters and The National Guide.

Finally, the credit recommendations are kept up-to-date by an annual

review which amounts to a simple provision of information by mail on the courses and any changes to them. At five year intervals, a site visit is conducted by one or two representatives to determine what, if any, requirements exist for re-evaluation.[4]

ACE Registry of Credit Recommendations

Organizations that have ACE credit-recommended courses have the responsibility of providing a transcript or report to verify to a college or university that an individual has completed the course(s) for which credit recommendations have been established.

Experience shows that a transcript from a noncollegiate organization might not always have the power to penetrate the outer defenses of some academic institutions. At many institutions, the registrar and admissions office operate on a basis of division of labor and decentralization as in other organizations. All too often, the initial recipient of a transcript may be an inexperienced person who has been given firm guidelines and iron-clad rules to guide and even prevent sound judgment. For example, "Transfer credit is acceptable only from an accredited institution." Noncollegiate organizations are, of course, not accredited institutions. So, it may be that working and adult students are thwarted before they even get started in making use of the credit recommendations. The organization can do much to help its employees, members, or customers by talking to the appropriate officials at the institutions which they normally attend and by pointing out that credit recommendations have been established by the Council.

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[4]This is a summary account of the evaluation process. For additional information, please contact the Program on Noncollegiate Sponsored Instruction, Office on Educational Credit and Credentials, American Council on Education, One Dupont Circle, Washington, D.C. 20036. (tel.: 202-833-4920)

However, to assist the individual and the organization in making effective use of the Program, a uniform transcript from a recognized educational organization such as the Council can be effective. Consequently, the ACE Registry of Credit Recommendations was established. The evaluation process of PONSI and the ACE Registry now provide a concerted effort on the part of the Council to help adult learners acquire college credit for employer-sponsored education.

Credit Acceptance: Implications for Educators

Recent efforts of PONSI have been targetted at ensuring greater success for these adult learners in their efforts to become "credentialed." Consequently, PONSI also operates a series of semiannual workshops to encourage acceptance of the ACE credit recommendations.

These workshops are held at different business sites around the country and bring together PONSI organizations and local college or university officials.

Perhaps, the greatest cooperation in this credentialing or at least mutually recognizing effort by PONSI is illustrated by the PONSI organizations and the community colleges.

There are, however, favorable implications for all segments of higher education that dare meet the challenge offered by burgeoning employer-sponsored instruction and the value that employers place on credentials.

For instance, by now, we've all heard about the declining enrollment illness and the obvious remedy provided by adult learners from the noncollegiate sector. That remedy should be taken seriously by higher education--not just the continuing education departments which tend to meet the needs of adult learners anyway.

Adult learners in noncollegiate organizations can generate additional

income for many institutions in their efforts to meet or maintain full-time equivalency requirements. These adult learners can also help alleviate the problem of faculty retrenchment which should be staring us square in the face by the end of this decade.

Through the tuition assistance programs provided by much employer-sponsored education, these adult learners can produce another source of income.

Moreover, the "ripple effect" can produce favorable results for college fund-raisers and development officers in their efforts to secure corporate support for general college operations and research activities.

Finally, the value that employers place on credentials--typified by the results of the ACE/OECC survey and the growth in the ACE Program on Noncollegiate Sponsored Instruction--can, in effect, result in a more global educational environment in which both traditional and nontraditional learner and educators will have the most rewarding educational experience!

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IMPLICATIONS FOR REGISTRARS AND ADMISSIONS OFFICERS IN AWARDING CREDIT FOR LEARNING ACQUIRED IN THE WORKPLACE

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By whatever name we call it--non-traditional education, extra-institutional learning, or external learning--the pool of validated credit earned outside the traditional college or university classroom setting continues to increase at a rapid pace.

In order for registrars, admissions officers, or other appropriate college or university officials to "feel comfortable" in recommending and/or awarding credit to individuals who present evidence of extra-institutional learning, there are in my mind at least four important considerations.

First, there must be recognition of the fact that all of the various sources of extra-institutional learning have a significant built-in level of quality assurance. The evaluation of military school courses by the Office on Educational Credit and Credentials of the American Council on Education (ACE) is for the single purpose of assessing their quality, thus resulting in recommendations for the awarding of collegiate level credit. The same is true of the American Council on Education's Program on Noncollegiate Sponsored Instruction, with the focus upon training offered by business, industry, labor and government. The tests included in the College Board's College Level Examination Program and those which are a part of the Proficiency Examination Program of the American College Testing Program are normed and validated instruments with a high degree of quaity assurance. Other credit by examination programs evaluated and approved by the American Council on Education carry the same stamp of quality approval. Thus, in this whole range of other learning experiences,

quality assessments or determinations need not be made by admission officers or registrars because that validation has already been done for them.

Second, traditional policies and procedures in institutions of higher education usually dictate that externally generated credit, in order to have currency, must be presented in an "official" manner. I do not fault these offices for their insistence upon official records. In fact, I would hope that many more persons in the workplace would insist upon such. In spite of the perceptions of many admissions officers and registrars, all of the sources of credit described briefly in these remarks are documented either through transcripts or score reports that are official; thus, they do have reliable currency. In addition, they are supported by Guides produced by the American Council on Education or by other appropriate agencies.

Third, if we accept at least for discussion purposes that the quality and currency of external credit are assured, the next institutional step must be to be sure that an adequate credit acceptance policy is in place. The acceptance of extra-institutional learning in an institution cannot be managed effectively on an ad hoc basis. There must be in the academic rules and regulations of the institution policies and procedures that maximize the articulation of external credit into the college and university. In my judgement, the absence of good institutional credit acceptance policies is the major reason for thousands of individuals being denied credit for valid experiences outside the classroom.

Finally, I would suggest to admissions officers and registrars that the "proof of the pudding" or the lack thereof lies in a followup of the rate of academic success of those who bring to the institution a source or sources of external credit. I am confident that a regularized, systematic followup of such students will produce significant positive results. It will document the quality, currency, and applicability of most extra-institutional learning whatever the source.

EMPLOYER REQUIREMENTS FOR TODAY'S WORK FORCE

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Abstract

Employers continue to use education as one of the basic qualifications for hiring and promotion, and in recent years the educational level of workers has increased dramatically. Our survey shows, there are almost as many workers who had completed a year or more or college as had ended their formal education with a high school diploma. However, as recently as 1970, only 25 percent of the workers in business and industries had completed any college after high school. This change reflects the rapid technological changes that have occurred in recent years which have required employees to be more educated and early retirement among older and generally less educated workers. Employers have also had to develop specialized training programs to meet their work requirements and in many cases develop literacy programs for employees on the work force.

Introduction

The increase in the proportion of more highly educated workers is supported by growth in the demand for a trained labor force and specialized technical employees. Computerized design and manufacturing operations, word processing and other new business machines, engineering development, biological research, and changing medical care procedures all need personnel with sufficient education to use the new technology which became available during the 1970's. Consequently, the proportion of workers in professional-technical and managerial occupations increased from 25 percent in 1970 to 44 percent today.

The number of college graduates in the professions increased substantially

over this same decade. Because there were so many more graduates competing for available positions, those finding professional-technical jobs represented a smaller percentage of all graduates.

Workers with no formal education beyond high school were at an increasing disadvantage, compared to those with 1 to 3 years of college, in finding employment in professional-techncial and managerial occupations.

In 1981, most high school dropouts were employed as operatives, nonfarm laborers, and service workers. These occupations frequently do not require a high school diploma as a condition of employment. However, the average educational attainment has risen substantially even in these jobs, and is now over a high school diploma or equivalency. Thus, even for these relatively unskilled occupations, drop outs faced increased competition from workers with more education.

The educational composition of the labor force may undergo several changes in the near future. First, the baby boom generation will have worked its way through the educational system by the 1990's, putting an end to the bulge in the number of workers in entry level jobs. Second, the next wave of labor force entrants will be smaller, and the relative shortage of new high school and college graduates may lead to more readily available entry level jobs.

On the other hand, these workers will face continuing competition for advancement from the huge group which preceded them. And third, modifications of natioanl priorities and possible changes in spending patterns in both the private and public sectors may shift the demand for more highly educated workers from one occupational group to another.

Education improves the quality of work. Continuing education is necessary to combat obsolescence. Career obsolescence is a particularly serious problem in technical occupations where new knowledge is expanding rapidly. But the

erosion of applicable knowledge and the creation of new information are certain to have an impact on everyone. Continuing education is critical not only in an occupation but also in daily living to perform their jobs skillfully, workers need to constantly learn new information and develop new skills. Continuing education is a necessary part of life for every worker.

Work improves the quality of education, both work and education are facilitated by the development of positive work values, such as the moral importance of work, pride in craftsmanship, efficient use of time, and joy in service. Personal initiative makes a good worker as well as a good student. Other characteristics common to productive workers and competent students include diligence, dedication, and perseverance. Feeling a sense of joy in being of service not only contributes to work performance but also motivates people to learn new information and develop new skills. Both workers and students need to develop the kinds of values that will make them more productive and competent.

Solutions

There are several options available to employers in helping employers with the problems in lack of training and education. The first is to rewrite all the materials used on the job, bring them down to lower reading levels. However, as proponents of plain language in the law have found out, it is not easy to rewrite highly complex, technical material in simple, easy-to-read language.

The second option is training workers in literacy programs that increase their reading ability to a level compatible with job requirements. Some employers contract out to community or public school adult education programs to do their literacy training. While others create in-house literacy education programs.

One reason general literacy programs may be less effective in teaching job related skills is that reading done on the job is different in both quality and quantity to reading done in training or academic situations.

Not only technical writers, but all staff can benefit from clear communication skills. A recent survey of business by the New York City Public School found that 40 percent of companies said their secretaries have problems in reading on the job. In the same report 50 percent of the companies reported that their managers were unable to write paragraphs free of grammatical and spelling errors.

The third step in closing the literacy gap is initiating job-related reading training programs on work sites as part of regular employee training. Successful programs depend on an in-depth analysis of the reading skills needed to perform on the job. Direct teaching of these skills--using the vocabulary and the types of reading--specific tasks repeated on a daily basis--must be the core of any good program. This approach may seem expensive, but considering the number of reading related errors worker's make, the cost is justified.

Conclusion

Therefore in today's work force the job seeker must be skilled in reading and communicating with others in order to effectively fulfill most job requirements for business and industry. Also continuing education beyond the high school diploma or its equivalency is necessary for an employee to remain knowledgeable and advance in job requirements. Our business and industries across the country are rapidly changing due to all the technological advancements made in the past few years and in order for these companies to remain productive and competitive, their employees must continually be trained for the new skill and knowledge requirements. This means those employees who have better prepared themselves educationally are going to be more valuable and

more employable than those with less education. Education is a life long process and those who continue to learn will benefit themselves, be productive for their employers and advance in their careers.